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ABSTRACT

Renewed attention on educational quality is forcing educators to consider experimenting with new organizational structures for achieving public school objectives. Eight recent reports on the state of public precollegiate education in the United States address the need for better educational quality. Although the eight reports vary in emphasis, viewpoint, and recommendations, most discuss the need for improved curricula, standards, teacher quality, and finances in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. Educators can respond to these reports by considering changes in educational organization. Local school districts can be restructured through consolidation or cooperative arrangements to influence the flow of educational resources. Examination of the structure of school and student activities can lead to altering the lockstep approach to the school day, varying time blocks for certain subjects, and improving the use of teacher time. Restructuring the educational professions can build specializations and professional advancement for teachers. The federal government must maintain educational access for minorities while supporting research leading to educational reform. State governments must ensure that state statutes and educational goals work together. State boards of education must ensure high standards. Local school districts must consider innovative and flexible reorganization. A comparison of recommendations from four major reports is included. (SB)

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WORKING DRAFT

Organizational Changes in Public Schools

By

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October 1983

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Organizational Changes In Public Schools

These are interesting times in public education. While the word "interesting" is usually a cliche, used when one doesn't know precisely what to say about the subject, the word is appropriate when talking about education today for precisely this reason. On the one hand school districts are under increasing financial pressure, whether it be from declining enrollments, decreased state commitment to public education or property tax relief given through farmland assessment legislation. Most, if not all, of you are personally familiar with this financial pressure, and the paper by Geske ably puts this financial plight into context. At the same time there is unusual public attention being given to public education by unrelieved progression of national commission reports and scholarly studies. This attention is unprecedented since at least the Sputnik era of the mid 1950's, and although it is too early to know precisely its impact upon public education, I think there are two broad themes. First, and most obvious, there is a high degree of dissatisfaction with the quality of public education. There is room for debate about the extent to which this feeling is justified, but there is little question that such a broad level of concern exists. Secondly, there is no indication that these reports will be translated easily into legislation that will supply or channel large amounts of additional moneys into public schools to do what some people think needs to be done. There are proposals calling for substantial increases in educational funding, making some people think wistfully about the post Sputnik era and the financial bonanza this generated for the schools for more than two decades. But it is doubtful that consensus will form around support for drastically increasing educational expenditures, at least in the near future, particularly with the political reality of a considerably smaller position of the population directly involved with children in elementary

or secondary schools-- as was the case in the 1950's-- and the economic reality of a sluggish economy unable to meet the current level of commitments.

What this suggests to me is that people interested in public education are going to be forced to think about and experiment with new organizational structures for achieving the objectives of public schools. The message is clear that schools are expected to provide greater educational effectiveness. The difficult economic times provide an incentive, in some districts an imperative, to examine the status quo. But in an ironical way this examination and pursuant action might provide the spark for enthusiasm around which additional support-- financial and moral-- might follow.

Before discussing the variety of organizational changes I am talking about, and the part which various levels of government play in this it is informative to consider a number of the commission reports and national studies which have reported on the state of precollegiate education in this country. Although a detailed analysis of each of these reports is beyond the scope of this conference it is instructive, for two reasons, to provide a brief description of each report. First, most of these reports have received wide publicity in the media and have the potential for focusing the debate of the future of public education in this country. Therefore it is imperative for professional educators to know these reports and to become involved in the debate about their significance for educational reform. Secondly, several of these reports include observations and/or recommendations about the organization of public schools. These matters, being an important segment of your deliberation today, will be highlighted.

A Nation At Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform. The Report of the National Commission on Excellence In Education[1]

In April of this year the first, and perhaps the most widely publicized of all these national commission reports was made public. The National Commission on Excellence In Education was created in 1981 by Secretary of Education Terrell Bell and was composed of 18 members drawn from various educational perspectives. The commission drew upon information and testimony provided at numerous public hearings around the country and from forty commissioned research papers, as well as existing material. ~~From this~~ The commission states, in uncompromising terms, the importance of education to our national well being, and the risk, to our national security, which inattention to the schools places ~~the security of the Nation~~ us. The report documents that mediocrity is the norm in American education but emphasizes that we do not have to settle for this. A call is made for vigorous public support for educational excellence.

> We define "excellence" to mean several related things. At the level of the individual learner, it means performing on the boundary of individual ability in ways that test and push back personal limits, in school and in the workplace. Excellence characterizes a school or college that sets high expectations and goals for all learners, then tries in every way possible to help students reach them. Excellence characterizes a society that has adopted these policies, for it will then be prepared through the education and skill of its people to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Our Nation's people and its schools and colleges must be committed to achieving excellence in all these senses.[2]

And this commitment to excellence does not allow for a decreased commitment to educational equity.

The Commission made recommendations in five broad areas, each with several implementing recommendations.

Content:

Finding that most secondary school curricula have been diluted, with no central purpose, the commission recommended curricular changes which, among other things, require a foundation in five academic areas-- the so called New Basics include 4 years of English, 3 years of Math, 3 years of Science, 3 years of Social Studies and 1/2 year of Computer Science for all high school students who seek a high school diploma. Proficiency in foreign language is stressed with a recommendation that foreign language begin in the elementary grades. Support is also given for demanding courses in fine and performing arts and vocational education.

Standards and Expectations:

The Commission recommended that high schools, colleges and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards and higher expectations, both for academic performance and for student conduct and that four year colleges and universities raise their admission requirements. The implementing recommendations focused on increasing the reliability of grades as an indicator of academic achievement; the raising of admission standards at 4-year colleges and universities to build upon and reinforce the importance of the five basic areas; administering nationwide achievement tests at critical transition points to monitor student performance and upgrading the quality of texts and other curriculum materials.

Time:

The Commission recommended that significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. Implementing recommendations suggested realizing this through more effective use of the existing school day-- more homework assigned, better use of the school day, and reduction of disciplinary responsibilities of teachers-- as well as longer school days and longer school years.

Teaching:

Basically the Commission concluded that the quality of the teaching staff has to be upgraded. Your attention is given to the inability to attract academically able students to teaching, to the need for upgrading teacher preparation programs, to the need to upgrade the quality of the professional life that teachers face and to meet the shortage of teachers in certain key academic areas.

Leadership and Fiscal Support:

The Commission recommended that citizens across the nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms. The implementing recommendations in this area concentrated on the leadership roles of principals and superintendents; on the roles of local, state and federal governments; and on the need for educators, parents and public officials to assist in implementing the reforms proposed by the Commission.

The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report
On Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy[3]

This report raises concern about the inability of elementary and secondary schools to meet the educational needs of this country's students. Schools are charged with trying to satisfy too many demands, and the Twentieth Century Fund report calls for schools to focus on the fundamental purpose of providing "the basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating; technical capability in computers; training in science and foreign languages; and knowledge of civics."

The Task Force report calls for a special responsibility of the federal government to provide leadership for increasing educational quality while insuring equality of access. A national Masters Teachers Program is proposed to recognize

and reward classroom teaching excellence. The report emphasizes curriculum upgrading in language training (both English and foreign languages) and mathematics and science education. The federal government should provide financial support, particularly to guarantee education of those special categories of students--the poor, the handicapped and the non-English speaking--who are politically powerless, as well as shouldering the burden of gathering and monitoring the educational data to insure accountability of our educational institutions.

The Educational Equality Project of the College Board[4]

Concerned about the mediocrity in precollegiate education in this country the College Board is committed to pursue the joint goals of excellence and equality through the Educational Equality Project. Recently the project released its report, Academic Preparation for College, which describes a preferred pattern of preparation ~~which~~ secondary schools can employ to better prepare high school students for college. There is recognition of the interdependence between learning basic academic competencies and learning basic academic subjects. The desired academic competencies are defined. For example, writing includes the "ability to conceive ideas" and "the ability to organize, select and relate ideas" as well as "the ability to write Standard English sentences with correct structure, verb forms, punctuation . . . and other matters of mechanics, word choice and spelling." Other competencies such as mathematics, studying and computer knowledge include both the conceptual skills related to that competency as well as the more mechanical tasks associated with each competency.

Academic Preparation for College identifies the six basic academic subjects: English, the arts, mathematics, science, social studies and foreign languages. A rationale is provided for the inclusion of each of these subjects as one of the six basic academic areas.

This book emphasizes doing well and mastering these competencies while studying basic academic subjects. This short book is intended to provide motivation for high schools to upgrade the quality of their academic offerings.

Action For Excellence: A Comprehensive
Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools
From the National Task Force on Education
for Economic Growth[5]

The National Task Force, chaired by Governor Hunt of North Carolina and comprised of governors, legislators, corporate chief executives, state and local school board members, educators, and others interested in education, reported to the nation through the Education Commission of the States. The central theme of this plan is that the economic well being of our country is threatened by the mediocrity of our precollegiate schools. A call is made for expanding the definition of basic skills taught in schools as well as renewing the energy and commitment to the curriculum of the schools.

There are eight action recommendations made, most of which give attention to familiar themes such as expressing a new and higher regard for teachers, assuring quality, increasing productivity in the academic program, improving leadership and management, better serving unserved or underserved students and increasing resources for schools to achieve these objectives. Two new themes introduced by the National Task Force include a recommendation that each state develop and implement a plan for improving precollegiate public education and a recommendation that more effective partnerships be developed to improve education. These partnerships could include ties between schools and businesses, higher education and different organizational configurations.

The Task Force has not disbanded but continues to meet and promote efforts to implement the Plan to improve the schools.

Science Education Report
issued by the
National Science Board[6]

The National Science Board issued a report decrying the condition of math and science education in this country. The recommendations include establishing 2,000 model schools with special science and math programs upgrading training for the country's 1.16 million teachers responsible for these subjects at high school levels and below, more required technical courses and longer school days or years. This report recognizes that education is a local matter but called for the federal government to take a leadership role in promoting math and science education. This leadership role carries identified financial responsibilities. The report calls, among other things, for regional model schools and upgrading teacher training in math and science at an estimated cost of $1.5 billion the first year and $6.5 billion over the course of 12 years.

High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America,
a study by the Carnegie Foundation
For the Advancement of Teaching[7]

This 355 page report, written by Ernest Boyer, the president of the Carnegie Foundation, is the product of three years of investigation which was conducted by 25 educators and researchers in 15 diverse high schools across the country. The richness of this report cannot be summarized briefly. Still several salient points need to be made.

The report calls for a core curriculum in the high schools, but unlike other studies which emphasize math and science this report focuses on the centrality of language. There is also a recommendation that students complete a service requirement which would involve them in volunteer work in the community or school.

Considerable attention is given to upgrading the quality of the teaching profession and improving school leadership. Emphasis is placed upon leadership coming from the building level.

The report recommends that large, comprehensive high schools reorganize themselves into smaller "schools-within-schools" in order to establish a more effective social support mechanism for students. The report states, "we believe the preferred arrangement is to have bigness and smallness-- a broad education program with supportive social arrangements."

Grant money will be available, administered by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, to implement some of the proposed reforms.

A Study of High Schools by Theodore Sizer[8]
(yet unpublished)

Theodore Sizer, Dean of the Howard Graduate School of Education has been chairman of a group conducting "A Study of High Schools" for the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools. Sizer is writing one of the volumes from this study, and although the volume has not yet been published, a provocative article by Sizer appeared in the June issue of Phi Delta Kappan[9] which calls for a reorganization of the high school. He wants a reengineering of the structure of the high school. The American high school, he claims, has a dysfunctional structure.

Sizer develops several themes which he thinks would characterize this new high school structure, only a few of which I want to highlight.

First, the academic mission of the school needs to be more sharply articulated. But unlike many of the reports which provide a long list of minimally necessary subject matters Sizer calls for a simpler, better-defined list of goals. What is actually focused upon will emphasize certain higher order thinking skills-- such as reasoning, imagining and analyzing-- and the active involvement of students. This type of learning will take place through confrontation and dialog, not through flooding students with facts to memorize. Memorization of facts will be deemphasized with the central goal of schooling being students becoming able to teach themselves and wanting to do so.

This image of schooling has significant consequences for the type of coverage that can be realized and for the role and function of teachers. There will need to be larger blocks of time which students can use to get into the type of dialog and controversy necessary for development of these skills. Also, teachers will be able to educate fewer students this way than they currently manage. Teachers deserve more autonomy over their schedules and the way they perform their jobs. Part of this autonomy can be realized through restructuring the profession so that there is more variety in the roles that teachers perform in their courses. This variability will be reflected through differentiated salaries, too.

Lastly, the organization of the high school needs to get away from the current lock-step pattern of age grouping and isolation from the community. Students must be allowed to progress at their own rates. Instruction needs to be geared to the learning styles of the students. Also there is a lot which can be learned outside of the school. Schools should capitalize on this supplementary learning and provide incentives for students to use these out-of-school opportunities to help them learn even more.

This is a provocative call to think of restructuring our high schools to realize more effective learning.

> school reform will start as an effort in exploratory engineering, designing and testing new structures appropriate to the adolescents, the teachers and the culture of the 1980's. We need new models of schooling that attempt several new approaches at once-- a necessity, given how most of the important aspects of high school structure affect every other aspect."
>
> A Study of Schooling
> by John Goodlad[10]

Following eight years of research by forty-three researchers who conducted more than 27,000 interviews in a variety of schools spanning the different types and different locations across the country John Goodlad recently published his findings.[11] Two articles in the March and April, 1983 issues of the Phi Delta Kappan provided a preview of these findings. In the April issue Goodlad makes

several recommendations for school improvement, several of which have important implication for the organization of the school.

Before presenting some of these recommendations it is important to state his general finding about precollegiate schooling in this country. Teaching and learning at all levels of schooling are characterized by a sameness. Classes are teacher dominated with memorization of facts and recall the central themes, not on problem solving or inquiry. Although greater variation was reported in the factors comprising what can be called the culture of the school-- pervasive values in the school climate, principal's treatment and views of teachers, teachers' perceptions of their principals, qualitative elements in the teacher/student relationship and parental contact with teachers, to name a few,-- the final teaching and learning process of the school can be characterized by a sameness. Students have very little opportunity during the academic program to interact with teachers or with one another. It is not surprising then, that students were directed toward the social and extracurricular because of the intellectual vacuum in the schools.

Goodlad emphasizes, contrary to many of the other national reports, that the restructuring or redesign of these schools will have to be done within the system, piece by piece, in a cooperative process and not by imposed solutions from outside.

Simply stated Goodlad recommends a system where the state clearly articulates a full range of goals for schooling that have emerged over time and on which there now appears to be substantial agreement. "School districts," Goodlad says, "should be expected to assure the presence in each school of a comprehensive curriculum encompassing academic, citizenship, vocational, and personal goals equally accessible to all students."[13]

School districts will be responsible for meeting these educational objectives, but the local school is the focal point for deciding how to meet these objectives

within the particular characteristics of its staff and student body. This will necessitate a dialog at the building level, which Goodlad expands upon.

> "There should be extensive dialog at the district and building levels regarding the meaning of these goals, the relative emphases to be placed on each in the light of local conditions, and the means of fulfilling them. This dialog should create an awareness of the need for an attention to teaching procedures and learning activities frequently neglected in classrooms. The faculty of the English department in a high school, for example, should discuss how to achieve student competence not only in writing but also in areas of personal and social development. Unless each department considers the whole range of goals of schooling, only those goals within the narrow subject-matter specialization will be promoted in its program--and the same will be true of every department of an entire school. There is much more to schools than preparation for and performance on achievements tests." [14]

This will pace unusual responsibility upon the building leader to conduct this dialog, articulate it into a meaningful program of action and monitor it through sensible interpretation of a variety of data.

In addition Goodlad argues for concerted specific attention to curriculum and instruction. He believes that this concerted action must come as part of the process of dialog, decision making and action by various constituencies in the school. In order to institutionalize a structure that will necessitate teacher and administrator interaction Goodlad proposes organizing schools in four year units of not more than 100 at the elementary level and not more than 160 at the secondary level. A team of adults guides the learning of this group over the four year period, getting to know one another very well in the process. Goodlad elaborates.

> "Each unit would be self-sufficient for most learning activities but would share such facilities as the main library, gymnasium, shops, playgrounds, etc. Schools would have considerable autonomy to distribute full-time teacher equivalents (FTEs) as they saw fit, such arrangements to be included as part of the planning documents, shared periodically with the superintendent. Consequently, four teaching FTEs might be divided in a primary unit among a head teacher, two career teachers, an aide, and an intern."[15]

There would be a variety of types of teachers, with important implications for career patterns, salary differences and developing different expertises.

This recommendation also carries with it a very different view of the role of the student. Goodlad wants to replace the present passive role of students with an active role. Peer teaching-- students helping teach other students-- is a central component of this active responsibility.

> "The multi-aged grouping created by the vertical unit structure directs attention to the possibilities for peer teaching among students. Those of us who once taught in one-room schools found in upper-grade students the teaching resources needed to assure additional practice and, ultimately mastery learning for other students-- and those students doing the teaching enhanced their own mastery of the subjects that they taught. The effective use of students as allies in the teaching process requires that teachers embrace a new perspective on the teaching process. They must promote a classroom ethos in which students are responsible not only for their own learning but also for that of their classmates. Under such circumstances, cheating becomes almost impossible." [16]

I. Areas of Possible Organizational Change

Whether motivated by financial necessity due to declining enrollments or decreased support levels or by attempts to develop new strategies to increase levels of student learning considerable attention will be given to possible organizational changes. Consider a few of these areas of change, several of which will be presented in considerable detail while others are much more exploratory.

In thinking about possible organizational changes it is helpful to distinguish between changes in the school district and changes in individual schools.

A. Restructuring the Local School District

Although states have primary responsibility for providing public education in our constitutional federal system our historical experience has been that ~~much~~ most of this responsibility resides in local school districts. Even though this educational responsibility is supplemented by the state board of education, regional offices of education and regional educational cooperatives the local school district is unquestionably the most significant unit for ~~directing~~ obtaining and then reallocating educational resources. The restructuring, the reorganization of these school districts, is one way to influence the flow of these resources.

We are all aware of the increased interest in the merger or consolidation of neighboring school districts as a response to declining enrollments and dwindling resources. With the enrollment decline continuing in approximately 80% of the Illinois districts and the sizeable number of districts will continue to be attractive. Still, it is not clear that sufficient financial or educational incentives exist to overcome the loss of local identity ~~with~~ to a school when districts are merged. There is also some question about the rationality of recognizing three different types of districts. This organizational structure will apparently come under closer scrutiny, but it is doubtful that this structure will be abondoned in the near future.

Beyond consolidation or merger of school districts there are a number of organizational relationships that can be utilized for expanding the type of educational services available to students. These seem to be most relevant for small districts that do not have the scale to undertake certain initiatives alone. Cooperative arrangements-- modeled after the special education or vocational education systems-- can be expanded to enrich opportunities for gifted students, or for particular parts of the curriculum. Beyond this it would be possible for staff in two or three districts to cooperate on curriculum development. Consider, for example, the high school social studies teachers from two or three small districts collaborating on revising the U.S. History curriculum.

The regional superintendents are able to provide a small number of cooperative ventures that serve several districts. This cross district responsibility could be encouraged.

Some states are instituting specialized schools which will draw upon students from all over the state and which self-consciously provide models of teaching and curriculum to other schools ~~throughout~~ the state. North Carolina, for example, has funded a boarding high school which specializes on math and science instruction.

The lab schools at Illinois State University and the University of Illinois have the potential for being moved in this direction, but there is no indication of ~~any~~ interest in doing this.

In addition to the informal arrangements that can be made between districts in a number of areas there is also room for encouraging activities that go beyond local district identification. For example, the IHSA could allow some competitions in which students from an area, rather than a particular school district, would form the basis of the team. Or, more importantly, if there are circumstances in which there aren't sufficient numbers of interested students to make a team in a school district they would be allowed to join students in another district.

The comments by Goodlad and Sizer about the desirability of smallness suggest we may want to be more creative about how we approach consolidation. Both call for fostering small manageable social structures within a rich educational support environment. This ought to make us think hard about consolidation as a means simply of getting large numbers of students together. Rather, it suggests that we need to inquire about ways of insuring the strong support services-- the library, physical education facilities, etc. This, then, suggests that cooperation with other governmental bodies might produce cooperative results that could benefit both parties. For example, can the library facilities of the small town be coordinated with the school, or the physical plant and physical education facilities be coordinated and shared with the village or municipality or park district? Some of the support services which define quality education also provide indicators of a qualitative life that other people in the community can utilize.

B. Examination of Structure of Schools and Activities That Students Engage In

B. Examination of Structure of Schools and Activities That Students Engage In

Goodlad's characterization of the sameness of schooling-- teacher centered instruction, classes with approximately the same number of students and the tyranny of the schedule and the bells which block instruction into regular patterns throughlut the day-- invites us to think of alternative organizational structures. Assuming the luxury of disregarding the reality of scheduling the students it is instructive to imagine possible alternative structures. Two rather simple ways of looking at altering the structure of the students' school day are the fixed length periods and the predictability of class size. It is easy to think about allocating different amounts of time to biology than to English or math than to Spanish. Not only might this relationship be different as a general standard, but it also might be different for one individual student than for another. It is also easy to think of variations between days of the week. For example, a large block of time could be spent on biology on Tuesday but it would receive no time on Wednesday or Friday. The variation on class size is also easy to picture. There could be times when 150 students listen to a lecture, other times when 5-10 students engage in a discussion or prepare a project and still other times when students work alone reading, writing, interacting with a computer keyborad or whatever.

In order to realize these different configurations schools will need to be able to take advantage of certain technologies available and be prepared to utilize the time of the teachers differently. The possibilities of technology are all very familiar but probably not very widely used currently. Audio and video tapes as well as computers all provide ways for students to get information that frees up teachers to do more diagnostic work and more interacting, more challenging dialogue with students. It is not unusual for a teacher in the current lockstep classroom pattern to give the same lecture to 3 or 4 classes of

25-30 students each period. It is possible to tape this lecture and free up the teacher for other types of student interaction for the other 2 or 3 periods.

Although there is nothing new in any of this there are probably serious reservations about how the school could function with so many potential variation in time and space allocations. I am not exactly sure of the blueprint myself. But it is clear that the learning environment would be very different and would probably have to be done by managing the structure for a small group of students. So, a group of X teachers working with 100 or 150 students over a period of 3 or 4 years could be in the position to vary the structures of the organization.

C. Restructuring the Educational Professions

1. Teachers

Although the learning process is a very complicated one the teaching profession is probably less differentiated than almost any other profession. Specialization has been the trend in both the medical and legal professions in the last two decades while teachers basically perform in the same way across the teaching profession. Teachers specialize in early elementary education or high school social studies, but they do not specialize in the functions or performance of their jobs. Teachers generally have a predictable number of students and are paid according to a set salary schedule. The job descriptions of teachers and their expected performance varies little across ages of children or subject matter expertise. With the current concern over the quality of teachers in the classroom and the lower qualifications of candidates in certain teacher training programs, and actual shortages in other areas, it is appropriate to consider the structure of the teaching profession.

Merit pay has jumped into national attention as a proposed response to reward, and presumably thereby encourage, better teaching. Much of the discussion around merit pay seems clumsy and tending to overlook the real measurement problems involved with making judgments about quality. A more promising approach

would, I think, be to build upon the diversity of teachers. Look to develop specializations among teachers, ranging from subject matter expertise to curriculum expertise to other expertise, as well as allowing a variety of types of positions. These positions could range from master teachers through classroom teachers to teacher aides and technology specialists. There could also be room for job sharing and part time teachers to participate in the teaching force. These different positions would require different qualifications and would have different ranges of remuneration. They also provide a basis for professional advancement that does not currently exist.

2. Administrators

There is a trend toward school district decentralization with greater autonomy placed upon the local building. Administrators will need to have a wide range of skills in working with people and understanding curriculum to be able to satisfy these new expectations.

II. Implementation of Organizational Changes

At a time when little variation exists in the schooling of children the publication of a number of national commission reports and national studies of education propose a variety of recommendations to respond to certain perceived deficiencies of precollegiate education. This scrutiny has focused attention and debate about precollegiate education, but except for isolated instances of school district consolidation the nature of the policy responses remains to be determined. The challenge is how to upgrade the quality of public elementary and secondary education without compromising our attention to cultural, racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity. We can, I believe, agree upon this as an honorable goal. The interesting problem is identifying those policies which will maximize the likelihood of this occurring.

It is important at the outset to recognize the wide differences in view points, emphases and recommendations generated by these national reports and studies. The reports differ both upon the role of the federal government in initiating reforms and the prescriptiveness of the reforms. I must admit at the outset my perspective for thinking about policies which will most effectively reform the educational system. Although I am sensitive to the need to attract new and different resources to aid in upgrading education I am supportive of Sizer and Goodlad in looking to reform coming from local school districts with broad involvement by a number of constituencies. With this admission let's consider policy initiatives which will provide an environment for these structural changes.

Federal

The federal government can play a significant role in making resources available to respond to improving precollegiate education, but his financial commitment threatens to lead to prescriptive solutions which are easy to articulate but preclude experimentation with a variety of options. The government should be vigilant in protecting minorities and supporting research which explores the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches taken.

State

A. The Legislature and Governor

Under our constitutional system the state assumes primary responsibility for providing a free public education. In carrying out this responsibility the legislates certain specific requirements and then delegates other educational responsibilities to other governing bodies. Major responsibility is given to local boards of education with regional offices of education and the state board of education. given certain responsibilities. This framework often limits the range of options that are available in organizing a particular activity.

In responding to concerns about educational quality there are two things which the state legislature needs to be attentive to. First, the state needs to be alert for dysfunctional relationships between certain statutes and what it desires to achieve. For example, much attention has been given to the charge of teachers who are poorly qualified for the teaching assignments they hold. Yet this concern is voiced at the same time that the state requires-- in absence of a collective bargaining agreement to the contrary-- that bumping privileges be based upon seniority in a reduction-in-force situation so long as the teachers are minimally qualified for the position. Let the legislature be alert for teacher quality in examining the impact of various statutes. This may be naive given the political interests that legislators have in paying attention to certain legislation. Still, it is probably time that there needs to be more information gotten to legislators about how certain statutes-- existing as well as proposed-- are likely to affect educational outcomes.

Second, the state needs to be attentive to a structure of organizational authority that allows maximum potential for flexibility in responding to educational matters. Collective bargaining is one area that has the potential for allowing such flexibility. It is potentially a vehicle for teachers to be involved in critical decision making that could speak to upgrading certain educational practices. Yet their collective bargaining exists within a statutory framework that dictates certain constraints. For example, it is difficult for districts to utilize part time teachers or to define teaching in a broader range of instructional types. If collective bargaining exists to protect the interest of the teachers why not strike some of the protectional teacher legislation from the statutes?

Consolidation provides another example of the limitations that are placed upon school districts. Although some of the 1983 statutory revisions have

loosened this somewhat there are still a number of options that are not possible. It would be difficult to arrange a joint ownership of certainly facilities like a library between a school district and a community or to allow a contracting out of certain students to a neighboring district. The technology of teaching allows us to think about organizational arrangements that do not require the collection of students at the same location every day the way we have thought about it historically. The implications of this for the role of the local school district is critical, and the current statute does not allow this flexibility.

B. State Board of Education

The State Board of Education occupies a position in which it can speak to the Governor and legislature about the implication of proposed and existing of state policies upon educational quality. It also has the responsibility establishing certain educational standards and monitoring compliance with these. The state board needs to be careful that these state standards are articulated sufficiently high and sufficiently broadly so that local school districts have some flexibility about how to meet them in a fashion most appropriate to its circumstances.

In addition the state board will want to support initiatives to test different arrangements and organizations of instructional resources to see how they work. For example, the State Board of Education could take the lead in coordinating intensive use of computer technology in 2 or 3 school districts. University and business expertise could be included in this initiative. The general notion is that more work needs to be done on developing computer assisted instructional software as well as working on the integration of this material into the instructional program. Initiatives such as this could go a long way to being disseminated to other districts as well as providing a training site for teachers from other districts who are interested in C.A.I.

The State Board could also initiate, once again with funding and some staff

support, some innovative organizational changes in small school districts short of consolidation. This could range for support for sharing of certain specialized staff between districts to establishing networks of students between schools to encourage greater in-depth concentration in math or science or English or foreign language. There are actions the board can take which symbolize support for academic endeavors and which can encourage faculty and students to broaden their contacts and their perspectives.

Local School Districts

Much of the responsibility for improving education will fall upon the local district, and the district will enjoy some discretion to decide the quality of the educational program it wants and will have some degree of flexibility to try to realize this. It is possible that the collective bargaining process can be utilized to realize some innovative realignments and to bring teachers' expertise into the policy making arena. Still, given the largely adversarial nature of this relationship the way it has been practiced to date in Illinois does not make me sanguine.

Community discussions will be important in articulating the curricular objectives of a particular school, and then cooperation by teachers and staff will be necessary to make certain small innovative steps which will be necessary to realize these objectives. Some changes will necessitate drastic changes in the way students and teachers interact, and this change will probably need to take place gradually.

Conclusion

Judicial and legislative concern about the civil rights of students over the past two decades has led to the proceduralization of schools and the application of strict regulatory contract. Due process evolved as a constitutional standard in which students are required to receive a notice and hearing before certain sanctions can be applied. This was expanded as the legislative mechanism employed in 94-142 to arrive at the most appropriate placement for handicapped children. In fact, the nature of administration of public schools can in many ways be described in procedural terms. Much of the administrator's time is spent talking with various constituencies to see if they agree to a particular resolution.

Legislators refined the regulatory model to apply to alleged civil rights violations. General legislation was passed and then administrative agencies wrote detailed prescriptive regulations which identified prohibited behavior. Due process and civil rights remedies will contineu to be available, as they well should. It is not clear whether this prescriptive regulatory model will be applied to our current concerns over the quality of our instructional program. In some ways it is easier to apply the regulatory model to certain things such as time in school or the number of required English or math courses necessary to graduate from high school, and we will certainly see some of this. But I fear that these changes will not go to the heart of the reform that is appropriate, and that it would be a mistake to rely on this model to try to realize such changes. Therefore I urge that we look beyond the regulatory model to look for initiatives, possible avenues for action, that will increase local flexibility to deal with organizational matters.

There is a major challenge in this. Although administrators are notorious for their lvge for railing against the mindless requirements that they were made to follow pursuant to the regulatory model it did allow the luxury of saying "I may not like doing this, but I have no choice and am required to do it." This

did provide a certain amount of security. With discretion and flexibility comes responsibility. The emphasis here will be on the superintendent and principal as instructional leaders. It is a responsibility that is sobering but one which I encourage.

APPENDIX A

To Paul Thurston's Paper

Organizational Changes In Public Schools

Appendix H

Comparison of Recommendations from Selected Education Reform Reports

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
CURRICULUM			
Significantly more time should be devoted to learning the "new basics"—English, mathematics, science, social studies, and computer sciences, and for the college-bound a foreign language. Rigorous programs should be provided to advance students' personal, educational, and occupational goals, such as the fine and performing arts and vocational education. Elementary schools should provide a sound base in English language development and writing, computational and problem-solving skills, science, social studies, foreign language, and the arts. Foreign languages should be started in the elementary grades with 4-6 years of study.	The federal government should clearly state that the most important objective of elementary and secondary education in the United States is the development of literacy in the English language.	The school curriculum should be strengthened. States and communities should identify skills they expect the schools to impart. The academic experience should be more intense and more productive. Courses not only in mathematics and science, but also in all disciplines, must be enlivened and improved. The goal should be both richer substance and greater motivational power—elimination of "soft" non-essential courses, more enthusiastic involvement of students in learning, encouragement of mastery of skills beyond the basics, e.g. problem-solving, analysis, interpretation, and persuasive writing. Educators, business and labor leaders, and other interested parties should clearly identify the skills that the schools are expected to impart to students for effective employment and citizenship.	The school curriculum should be designed to ensure that students achieve the specific outcomes which are deemed necessary, particularly if the student plans to enroll in college. These outcomes are identified in two sets: Basic Academic Competencies, including reading, writing, speaking & listening, mathematics reasoning & studying; and Basic Academic Subjects, including specific knowledge and skills in English, the Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Foreign Languages. In addition, the curriculum should ensure the students should acquire Computer Competency.
High School Graduation Requirements			
All students seeking a diploma should be required to complete (a) 4 years of English, (b) 3 years of mathematics, (c) 3 years of science, (d) 3 years of social studies, and (e) one-half year of computer science. For the college-bound, 2 years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended.	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—
Course Content			
(Detailed implementing recommendations are included for each subject area.)	—No comparable provision—	(A list of "Basic Skills and Competencies for Productive Employment" is contained in the Appendix.)	—See Curriculum—
Proficiency in a Second Language			
For the college-bound, two years of a foreign language in high school are strongly recommended.	Every American public school student should have the opportunity to acquire proficiency in a second language.	—No comparable provision—	College entrants will need proficiency in another language.

* Education Commission of the States

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
Time			
Significantly more time should be devoted to learning the "new basics" School districts and state legislatures should strongly consider 7-hour school days, as well as a 200- to 220-day school year. Time available for learning should be expanded through better classroom management and organization of the school day. Additional instructional time should be found to meet the needs of slow learners, the gifted, and others who need more instructional diversity than can be provided in the conventional school day and year.	—No comparable provision—	Every state should increase the duration and intensity of academic learning time. Students should be introduced earlier to such critical subjects as science. Schools should examine each school year, especially the twelfth grade, to ensure that time is not wasted. Both states and localities should consider lengthening the school year and the school day by extending teachers' contracts. Learning time should be increased by establishing a wider range of learning opportunities beyond the normal school day and year.	—No comparable provision—
Textbooks and Instructional Materials			
Textbooks and tools of learning and teaching should be upgraded and updated to assure more rigorous content and to reflect current applications of technology, the best scholarship, and research findings. Funds should be made available to develop texts for the disadvantaged, learning disabled, and gifted and talented.	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—
Textbook Adoption			
In adopting textbooks, states and localities should evaluate texts on the basis of their capacity to present rigorous and challenging material clearly and should require publishers to furnish evaluative data on effectiveness.	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—
Homework			
Students in high school should be assigned homework.	—No comparable provision—	States and local school districts should establish firm, explicit, and demanding requirements concerning homework.	—No comparable provision—
Effective Study and Work Skills			
Effective study and work skills should be introduced in the early grades and continued throughout the student's schooling.	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	One of the Basic Academic Competencies which students should acquire.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS			
The federal government, in cooperation with states and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, socioeconomically disadvantaged, minority and language minority students, and the handicapped.	Federal efforts to provide special education programs for the poor and the handicapped should be continued. Federal programs for the disadvantaged and limited English speaking should be maintained.	States and school districts should increase participation of young women and minorities in courses where they are underrepresented. States and school districts should identify and challenge academically gifted students. States and school systems should specifically include handicapped children in programs for education and economic growth.	Educational quality must not lead to actions that limit the aspirations & opportunities of disadvantaged and minority youth... arbitrary standards must not be imposed without concern for enabling students to meet them.
Special Fellowships for Academics			
—No comparable provision—	Special federal fellowships should be awarded to students to encourage the creation of small, individualized programs staffed by certified teachers and run as small-scale academies.	—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—
COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS			
Four-year colleges and universities should raise their admission standards in line with the recommended requirements for high school graduation.	—No comparable provision—	Colleges and universities should raise their entrance requirements.	The proposed outcomes are essentially minimum college requirements.
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS			
Grades should be reliable indicators of a student's readiness for further study.	—No comparable provision—	States and school systems should estalish requirements concerning discipline, grades, and other matters.	—No other comparable provision—
Standardized Tests			
Standardized tests should be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work. The purpose would be to certify credentials, identify the need for remedial work, and identify opportunities for enrichment.	—No comparable provision—	Effective programs should be established to monitor student progress through periodic testing of general achievement and specific skills. The testing program should be linked to a carefully designed program of remediation and enrichment for students who need special help.	
Student Progress			
Placement and grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to age.	—No comparable provision—	Student progress should be measured by tests of general achievement and specific skills with promotion based on mastery, not age. States and local districts should establish firm, explicit, and demanding requirements concerning student grades.	

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
Student Absences and Failures			
Attendance policies with clear incentives and sanctions should be used to reduce the amount of time lost through student absenteeism and tardiness.	—No comparable provision—	States, school systems, principals, teachers, and parents should work to reduce student absences and school failures. Efforts to deal with absenteeism and dropouts should include revitalizing course materials and making educational schedules flexible enough to accommodate students with special problems.	—No other comparable provision—
Discipline			
The burden on teachers to maintain discipline should be reduced by developing and enforcing firm and fair conduct codes, and by considering alternative rooms, programs, and schools for disruptive students.	—No comprable provision—	States and local school districts should establish firm, explicit, and demanding requirements concerning student discipline.	
TEACHERS			
Teacher preparation should be improved, and teaching should be made a more rewarding profession.	A major federal initiative should be undertaken that emphasizes the critical importance of quality teachers in America's schools.	States and school districts should improve methods for recruiting, training and paying teachers.	
Teacher Preparation			
Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, and to demonstrate competence in academic disciplines. Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs. Resources should be used to solve the problem of a shortage of mathematics and science teachers.	—No comparable provision—	Every state and local school district, with the fullest participation of teachers, should drastically improve methods of training teachers. States, singly or in cooperation with one another, should establish better pre-service and inservice education programs for teachers.	
Teacher Certification			
Efforts should be made to have qualified persons with academic training in mathematics and science eligible to teach. Other areas of critical need, such as English, must also be addressed.	—No comparable provision—	Teacher certification processes should be changed to make it possible for qualified "outsiders" to serve in the schools.	
Master Teachers			
School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish between the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher.	A national Master's Teacher Program should be established, funded by the federal government, that recognizes and rewards teaching excellence.	States should create career ladders for teachers.	

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
Teacher Education Institutions			
Colleges and universities should be judged on the performance of their graduates.	—No comparable provision—	Each state should substantially restructure and renew its teacher training curriculum, and should upgrade the academic quality of the teacher training curriculum so that entering teachers will meet higher standards.	—No other comparable provision—
Teacher Salaries or Grants			
Teacher salaries should be increased and made professionally competitive and market sensitive. School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. Teacher salaries should be performance based.	Master teachers would be awarded a grant of $40,000 per year for a period of 5 years. An incentive approach should be adopted to provide awards to teachers of exceptional merit; awards should be numerous enough to attract national attention and substantial enough to keep the master teachers in the classroom.	Every state and local school district, with the fullest participation of teachers, should drastically improve methods for paying teachers. Financial incentives for teachers should be keyed to differing responsibilities and to filling critical needs in certain subject areas.	
Teacher Performance			
Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers may be rewarded, average ones may be encouraged, and poor ones may be either improved or terminated. Master teachers should be involved in supervising teachers during their probationary years.	The master teacher proposal is designed to "pave the way for reconsideration of merit based personnel systems."	Boards of education and higher education officials should cooperate with teachers and administrators on ways to measure the effectiveness of teachers and reward outstanding performance. Procedures should be tightened for deciding which teachers to retain and dismiss.	
Recognition of Teachers			
—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	States, communities, the media, and businesses should devise new ways to honor teachers.	
Loans/Grants for Prospective Teachers			
Incentives, such as grants and loans, should be made available to attract outstanding students into the teaching profession.	A scholarship program should be used to augment the supply of teachers in mathematics and science as well as in foreign languages.	Scholarships and other financial incentives should be used to attract the most able people into teaching.	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT			
Citizens across the nation should hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms.	The executive and legislative branches of the federal government should emphasize the need for better schools and a better education for all young Americans.	Schools should use effective management techniques.	

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Principals			
Principals and superintendents must play a crucial role in developing school and community support for reforms. Administrative burdens and related intrusions on the teacher should be reduced to add to the time available for teaching and learning.	— No comparable provision —	Principals should be in charge of educational programs. Pay should be related to responsibilities and effectiveness. States should set higher standards for recruiting, training, and monitoring the performance of principals.	— No other comparable provision —
School Boards			
School boards must consciously develop leadership skills at the school and district levels if the reforms are to be achieved.	— No comparable provision —	— No comparable provision —	
Educators, Parents, and Citizens			
The Commission calls upon educators, parents, and citizens at all levels to assist in bringing about the reforms proposed in this report.	— No comparable provision —	— No comparable provision —	
FISCAL SUPPORT			
Citizens should provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms.	The federal government must continue to help meet the special needs of poor and minority students while taking the lead in meeting the general and overwhelming need for educational quality.	Schools should make the best possible use of resources. More funds are needed from all sources for selective investments in efforts that promote quality.	
Federal Government			
(See "PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS.")	Categorical programs required by the federal government should be funded through the federal treasury. The federal government should fund the Master Teachers Program. The federal government has a responsibility to help overcome the unevenness of State efforts to fund education. School districts with substantial numbers of immigrant children should receive Federal impact aid. Federal funds now used for bilingual education should be used to teach non-English speaking children how to speak, read, and write English.	The federal government has an essential supporting role in financing education.	
States and Localities			
State and local school officials, including school board members, governors, and legislators have the primary responsibility for financing and governing schools, and incorporating these reforms into educational policies and fiscal planning.	— No comparable provision —	States and localities have the chief responsibility for supporting the schools and making educational policy. States should continue efforts to secure more equitable distribution of educational resources. More human, financial, and institutional resources should be invested in education.	

The National Commission on Excellence in Education	Twentieth Century Fund Task Force	ECS* Task Force on Education for Economic Growth	The College Board
FEDERAL ROLE			
The federal government's role includes several functions of national consequence that states and localities are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting the constitutional and civil rights of students and personnel, collecting data, statistics, and general information about education; supporting teacher training in these areas of shortage or key national needs; and providing student financial assistance and research and graduate training. Assistance should be provided with a minimum of administrative burden and intrusiveness. The federal government has the primary responsibility to identify the national interest in education and also to help fund and support efforts to protect and promote that interest.	The executive and legislative branches of the federal government are called upon to emphasize the need for better schools and a better education for young Americans. The federal government should promote and support proficiency in English for all children in the public schools, but especially for those who do not speak English, or have only a limited command of English. Federal attention and assistance should go to economically depressed localities with concentrations of immigrant and/or impoverished groups as well as those that already are making strong efforts to improve their educational performance. The federal government should emphasize programs to develop basic scientific literacy among all citizens and programs to provide advanced training in mathematics and science for secondary school students. (Also, see "TEACHERS" above.)	(See "Federal Government" under "FISCAL SUPPORT" above.)	—No other comparable provision—
Federal Research Efforts			
(See "FEDERAL ROLE" above.)	Federal support should be provided for specific research activities such as basic data, educational performance, evaluation of Federal education programs, and fundamental research into learning processes.	—No comparable provision—	
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN			
(See "LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT")	—No comparable provision—	Each state should develop and implement a plan for improving education in grades K-12. Each governor should appoint a broadly inclusive task force on education for economic growth. This task force should develop an implementation plan for the state. Each local school district also should develop its own implementation plan.	
BUSINESS/EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS			
—No comparable provision—	—No comparable provision—	Partnerships for improving education should be formed with participation by businesses, labor and the professions. Public officials, higher education officials, and school officials should establish their own partnerships.	